28 March 2013 - This March is set to be the coldest since 1962 in the UK in the national record dating back to 1910, according to provisional Met Office statistics up to the 26th March.

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From 1 to 26 March the UK mean temperature was 2.5 °C, which is three degrees below the long term average. This also makes it joint 4th coldest on record in the UK.

Looking at individual countries, March 2013 is likely to be the 4th coldest on record for England, joint third coldest for Wales, joint 8th coldest for Scotland and 6th coldest for Northern Ireland.

Clearly March has been extremely cold and snowy and joins 2006, 2001, 1995, 1987, 1979, 1970 and 1962 as years when March saw some significant snowfall. Once all the figures are in, it's possible that the December to March period for 2012/13 will be comparable with 2010/11, 2009/10 or winters in the mid-1980s.

March - Top five coldest in the UK
1 1962 1.9 °C
2 1947 2.2 °C
3 1916 2.4 °C
4 1919 2.5 °C
5 1917 2.5 °C

Provisional UK statistics for March 2013

	mean temperature		sunshine duration		precipitation	
	Actual	Difference from 1981-2010 average	Actual	Percentage of 1981-2010 average	Actual	Percentage of 1981-2010 average
	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
UK	2.5	-3.0	59.3	58	62.2	65
England	2.9	-3.3	58.1	54	63.4	99
Wales	2.8	-3.0	73.9	73	86.2	74
Scotland	1.6	-2.5	58.6	63	50.3	36
N Ireland	3.0	-2.9	51.5	53	78.9	83
England & Wales	2.9	-3.3	60.3	56	66.6	94
England N	2.0	-3.5	57.6	57	54.0	72
England S	3.4	-3.2	58.3	53	68.4	118

Throughout the cold spell which started at the end of January Met Office forecasts and warnings have given accurate and timely advice to the public, emergency services and business across the UK.

Speaking on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme on 12 March, Catherine Brookes of the Highways Agency, said about significant snowfall: "We knew this was coming. It was forecast, we had plans in place and we followed them. All of our resources were available and we have been gritting continually."

In addition, the Sergeant from Events Planning in the Police Service of Northern Ireland said: "On behalf of the Senior Management Team, PSNI 'B' District South & East, thank you for all of your assistance over the past few days. The continual information you provided was integral in the decision making process to postpone yesterdays International football match at Windsor Park, Belfast and ultimately to cancel todays re scheduled fixture."

The cold weather is expected to continue through the Easter weekend and into April. You can stay up-to-date with Met office forecasts and warnings online, through our mobile apps, Facebook and Twitter , and through TV and radio broadcasts.

The full month figures for March 2013 will be available later next week and a summary of the month will be issued soon after.

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